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Vol 4 No 43

Atari's megabyte monster



ST BASIC - ALL IS REVEALED P9

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

- COMMODORE'S 128 DISC SETBACK
- MINER WILLY - THE FINAL CHAPTER
- AMIGA - THE CLONING BEGINS

MICRO MAGIC



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ATARI is poised to announce a number of new additions to its ST 386-based family next month.

Among the new models is a 3M Euro model, the 3040 ST.

The 3040 ST, which apparently is to be offered at this country together with a retail monitor for as little as £1,000, will be grandly compatible with both the planned 386 ST and 387 ST and will feature a built-in 128K formatted capacity disc drive.

The machine, together with the other new Atari models is likely to be previewed for the first time at the American Computer Show held in Las Vegas from November 30-31.

Atari is taking a large stand at the show and at the Personal Computer World Show, a closing third party software competition booth at its

stand to show ST titles. Atari UK declined to confirm any details of the other new models to be shown for the first time at Comdex.

"We don't stop with the 386 ST," said Rob Harding, Atari UK's sales and marketing manager. "The range will be moving both upwards and downwards and we hope that the new developments at Comdex will put a bit more excitement into the industry."

It is thought, though, that Atari may also give its 386 workstation, the TT, based on the 38600 processor, a preview at Comdex.

The 386-based monster unit, the PC38600, which features a built-in 128K formatted capacity disc drive, intended as an add-on and using lower levels and floppies will be shown. continued on page 16



TAW-CERT is the latest title from ORL, combining those modern, adventure-style war games, logic puzzles, and arcade action.

Taw-Cert will be released at the beginning of November for the Spectrum, at £29.99.

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Sir Clive's C5 venture appoints receiver

A RECEIVER has been called in to sort out the finances of Sir Clive Sinclair's troubled electric vehicle company. The decision follows nine months of disappointing sales after widespread criticism of the C5 vehicle's design at its launch in January. A creditors' meeting will be held shortly and the company is expected to go into liquidation. The receivers hope that a buyer will be found for the company, especially as research work on the more sophisticated C18 and C19 electric vehicles is apparently well advanced.

Sinclair Vehicles, which was renamed TPD on September 18, owed over £700,000 to 130 different suppliers. In addition, Sir Clive had personally invested £1m in the electric vehicle project

C128 hampered by disc drive delay

PURCHASERS of Commodore's new C128 micro, now available, will be disappointed to discover that they can only use the machine reluctantly in one of its three modes.

The new 1970 disc drive, designed to complement the new 128 series enabling it to

be used on 105 and CP/M models, has still to reach the shops.

Without the disc drive, the Commodore 128 is no more than a rebadged Commodore 64. Owners who already have the C24 or C64 disc unit will however be able to use a small number of CP/M packages on

the 128. The 124 will work with software written in the non-standard GCR CP/M for just. However, accessing the disc will be slow and the £199.99 1970 was specifically designed as a disc drive.

"We are expecting a shipment of between 8,000-10,000 this week," said a Commodore spokesman, who hoped that disc drives might become available next week.

It is not clear why the name change was made - at the same time, a direct subsidiary of TPD was formed, called Sinclair Vehicles (Sales), which is not involved, and continues to trade, administered by the joint owners, David Hogg and Anthony Looker of England.

"TPD sold all its assets to the subsidiary company," said David Hogg. "Its only assets now are its shares in Sinclair Vehicles (Sales)."

The next takes out by Mo-

ver against Sir Clive Sinclair is July, for £1 bn, was never served.

Apparently the dispute between the two has now been settled.

In its short existence, Sinclair Vehicles sold 4,500 of its C5 pedal-powered electric tri-cycles, having predicted sales of 100,000. The production line at Hogg's Merthyr Tydfil plant was up from 1,500 to 100 units per week in April, and then closed down altogether in August.

Datasoft in court over takeover bid

DATASOFT, the US software company responsible for titles such as *Arkanoid*, *Conan* and *Star Wars*, is currently involved in a court struggle over a proposed takeover.

Gilman, best known as a manufacturer of minis, has owned 40% of Datasoft for the last two years. Now it is trying to increase that share to 90%, and gain control.

Gilman's bid was rejected by Datasoft's managing director Patrick Eganham, and the matter has now been referred to a court hearing. Datasoft having been effectively been placed under a Chapter 11 ruling as the minis, whereby the company's trading is controlled by its bank. If the judge decides in Gilman's favour, Datasoft will then be administered by Sam Poole and Ted Hoffman, currently departing managers at Datasoft, and other executives appointed by Gilman.

However, Datasoft's titles, released in the country by US Gold, will not be affected.

"We have got the finished version of *Conan* which we have to release here by the beginning of November to do as properly with the film," said US Gold's general manager Tim Chacey. "The only slight hiccup is *Star Wars* on the Commodore 64 - the name for the isn't finished yet, and I'm not yet sure what will happen."



Spectrum 128:

A new picture of Sinclair's 128K Spectrum, launched in Barcelona last month, showing its separate numeric keypad. It is not expected in the UK until Spring 1988.

Atari's 1M monster

Continued from page 1

The new 1640MT has the 36 disc drive built into the main keyboard-type unit in the same way as the 560 SE, but on the opposite (right-hand) side. To accommodate the disc drive a number of the ports have been moved - the mouse socket on the 1640 SE to be found underneath the CPU so that the mouse and cable remain from the front of the keyboard, rather than from the side.

Spectrum Elite put back

FIREBIRD has been forced to delay the launch of the version of *Elite* it is now not clear when the game will appear.

"Spectrum *Elite* has now been delayed almost to the point of embarrassment," said Firebird publisher Herbert Wright. "We feel that the game as it stands is too difficult - while some people would be able to play through and reach *Elite* status, we really want everyone to enjoy the game."

Firebird has also changed

ing its separate numeric keypad. It is not expected in the UK until Spring 1988.

in game as regards its new range of Super *Elite* games, which include *Thunderbirds* and enhanced *Arkanoid* conversions of *Star Wars* and *Cyrix*. The steps, intended to be role titles which although expensive are of higher quality than the rest of the 5000 series will now cost £3.95 rather than the £2.95 previously planned.

The starting price of the *Elite* range has recently been reduced from £2.95 down to £1.95.

Commodore seeks to license Amiga chips

FAYFRANKS reaction from critics and the public alike to Commodore's new Amiga menu looks set to provide a series of unknowns and Amiga-lookalikes.

Commodore itself is also now considering licensing the custom chips in the Amiga, Agnus, Denise and Paula, to other hardware manufacturers in order to enable them to develop Amiga-compatible. It has also approached Memocom, the Bristol-based software house which wrote Amiga Dos about licensing AmigaDos together with the custom chips.

"Commodore has talked to us about licensing chips, and how we felt about licensing our operating system," said Peter Meehan of Memocom. "We said 'yes'! Anytime interested in licensing AmigaDos, please get in touch."

Superfamiliar graphics and sound created using custom

chips the Amiga's hallmark - are regarded by many consumers as the most important features for custom. One source inside another major home computer manufacturer indicated that licensing the Amiga's chips may not be as difficult as it appears.

Companies which are almost certainly now looking at Amiga-type technology for their latest projects include the MSX manufacturers, Amstrad and Atari.

Members of the Japanese MSX Prime have recently announced a series of MSX 1 machines with significantly improved graphics and are widely thought to be looking at the 65000-chip for MSX 2.

Amiga's breakthrough with an 85C chip technology now gives it the wherewithal to produce custom chips on a par with Amiga.

Amstrad is particularly interested in understanding Commodore's price. "We

have no plans for an Amiga rival at the moment," said William Peel, head of Amstrad. "The 65000 looks sure to last a lot longer than anyone thought, and there's no need for replacements."

"We'd love to do an Amiga look-alike if the technology was available, but we'd also want the software to be there. Amstrad does not take technological risks, and there'll be nothing in that line in the next twelve months. Mind you, if the Amiga were £400, I'd buy one tomorrow."

Miner Willy in new game for January

MATTHEW Smith, top selling author of *Miner Miner* and *Jet Jet Willy*, has in his corner (as it were) recruitment and written the third and final part of the Miner Willy trilogy, *Willy Meets the Pirates*.

In this game, Willy is being badly persecuted by the agents of the Island Empire, after their theft of his funds in the mines.

Fighter Pilot sequel launched

EIGHTEEN months after the release of its first acclaimed *Fighter Reconnaissance*, Dep-



tel by computer has announced the follow up, *Thunderbolt*, for the Spectrum. It should be out by December at £9.95.

"*Willy Meets the Pirates* uses a different graphics style in that the pictures will be larger," said Paul Fennmore, sales manager at Software Projects, which will publish *WMTT* and of which Matthew Smith is a director.

The program will be simultaneously released on Spectrum, Amstrad and Commodore 64 in January 1988. A price has not yet been released.

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Basic Basic for Atari's ST

Atari has finally released first versions of its Basic for the ST. Jeremy Wine presents the first look

Anyone who has recently acquired one of the new 16-bit Atari ST machines will have noticed as well as being the "power" word of the press" it is also that "without" most of its advertised bundled software.

Not least the Basic, which was expected to be available on launch, and was conspicuous by its absence.

Finally, however, the Basic is available - well, almost. The version that is reviewed here is, in the words of an Atari spokesman, "90% complete".

It has to be said that after such a long wait (I've had my machine for many months) I cannot but have a few ideas about what goodies would be included within this Basic.

In particular, would there be any hooks into the GEM operating system, enabling users of Basic to write their own GEM-like programs?

The quick answer is - forget it if you want to write GEM programs you'll need the GEM programmer's toolkit and companion in programming. Not what the Basic?

The version supplied to me was no dux (Wow - no Atari pay!) and contained around 140K of code. On loading Basic, the screen divides into four GEM windows, though only three are clearly visible. These are the List, Output and Command windows. A fourth window, Edit, is almost completely covered by the aforementioned windows and is accessed either by the Edit pull-down menu or by clicking the mouse pointer on the middle part of the windows. Of course, like all GEM packages, these windows can be rearranged in personal taste though the arrangement makes reasonable sense.

The size of the Output window, where the results of a Basic program are displayed, may at first seem small but the user can change the size of the window by means of the mouse or directly within the program using one of four Basic keywords (GSize, Change, Open, Pullin). Each of these commands are followed by a numerical value in the range 0 to 3, representing the four screen windows. In this way it is possible from Basic to direct such window operation to close the area within the window close or open a window and make a window full size. One of Atari's "W" bugs showed in the windowing area, when all windows were closed. There was no way to re-open a window and continue Basic. This has been corrected by Atari and will apparently be corrected by the release version.

The new thing ST Basic is not short of its editing tools. There's a host of them. What it lacks in speed and power it makes up in its editing facilities. The key function keys contain basic editing facilities such as deleting and inserting lines or characters. Such is Atari's enthusiasm for providing these facilities that they are not only available by pressing the relevant function key but also by using the drop-down menu (Edit) and mouse. I left space for choice.

In addition to the editing facilities, Atari has gone overboard to provide debugging commands to help the weary programmer track down those elusive gremlins that cause programs to crash. There is a drop-down menu which provides the now obligatory Trace option, listing the lines in the Command window as the program runs. This works in a similar fashion but prints only the line number. These two facilities are fairly standard and are no surprise. But Atari programmers obviously enjoy their comfort and they have provided a few routines to make error-catching that little bit easier.

Spoilt for choice

Break causes the program to stop executing after each program line and the line is displayed in the Command window while any output is shown in the Output window. Pressing the Return button passes the next line of the program to be run. Just in case you fancy doing

exactly the same a different way, the user can invoke the Rep command which reruns and precisely the same task. Normal program execution is resumed with Goto.

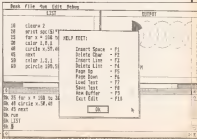
And that's not all. Pullin allows the programmer to follow the value of variables. Whilst a program is running, each time a changing variable is encountered, the name of the variable, its value and the line number are printed in the Command window. Unlike some of the command window. Unlike some of the editor section of Basic and the user can specify which line is to be edited. An omission which annoyed me was being unable to move the editing cursor by means of the mouse.

Annoying omission

Considering the emphasis on mouse control, it would make life easier if there was (as needed) to return to the keyboard. The final debugging feature is in addition to error messages which are generated as lines are typed in (provided in the Basic's syntax checker but think goodness not as rigidly). On loading a program (in the List window) which has generated error messages, a question mark (?) appears by each line where an error had been generated. This enables glancing through a long listing (one of its symptoms).

All these editing and debugging features suggest that more attention has been paid to appearances than to the structure and power of the language.

This is a pity as a machine of the ST's calibre should be boasting a fast, powerful, structured Basic. In a few benchmarks using simple loops ST Basic however, appears quite slow and was in some cases almost twice as slow as its equivalent program on my BBC. Where a specific function (in Gforth) was used



ST Basic Preview

though, the speed was more than acceptable. Atari recognizes that the Game is not as fast as it could be and I am assured that there will be an increase in speed before the final version. However, don't hold your breath at the speed will be there the what as a fast processor. I assume that we will have to wait for a faster Game Boy.

Chapters are poorly represented with only Chris, Silas, Patsy, Pilipec, and Colson commands. That will be viewed with great disappointment by those who have wanted to try their hand at graphics using Basic. No doubt somebody will argue that if no graphics were used, there's always Logo Run Basic on the IBM should have a host of graphics commands, not just those for user windowing and at the mercy of Auto and Peak, which is likely to produce some fun for an occasional add-on. It is also a pity for attempting to access Clien-

Sound accessible

The sound chip is as long lost accessible using the Sound and Wave commands. Nothing very special here but sufficient to control the nasal aspects of the sound chip including shape of envelope, direction etc.

The manual is primarily looking for the most used kind of boiler burner.

I've already mentioned the feeling that the Bush family power and that shows up in the poor range of central structures. For-Viet and White-Ward logs are present but that's it. I'd like to have seen a little more power in the shape of Do-Myself and Wagon-Old-School.

The user can return to the Commanding at anytime by using **System or Quit** (yet again, identical commands), though this does have the effect of wiping the program out of memory. The manual provided to me as a proof of the final version and can only be considered as a reference guide. As a source of references for keywords it is good, with the exception of the named commands abbreviation. It was intended to learn how

TABLE: Atari Basic command words

ABS	DEPTE	INT	OPEN	SPACE
ACC	DELATE	RIIL	EXPW	IPC
ACT	DM	LETS	OPTION BASE	ISB
ACTO	DM	LEN	OUT	STEP
ALIAS	ENDT	LET	POWELL	STOP
ALIAS	ELLIPSE	LINE INPT	POKE	STAB
ANITE	END	LINE INPTS	POLLUP	STRONG
CALA	EOF	LINEP	POKE	TRAP
CALC	ERA	LIST	FOR	STRAN
CHAIN	ERASE	LIST	PRINT	STRONG
CHAL	ERL	LOAD	PRINT	TAN
CINT	ERASE	LOC	PRINT USING	TAN
CIRCLE	EXP	ERA	PUT	TRACE
CLAR	FILE	LOT	QUIT	TRIST
CLARW	FILE	LOS	RANDOMIZE	TRIN
CLOSE	FIN	LOCUS	READ	UNDECK
CLOWW	FOAST	LPDS	REN	UNFOLLOW
COLOR	FOLLOW	LPINT	RENUM	UNFORM
COMMON	FOR	LAST	REPLACE	VAL
CONT	FOR	MESSAGE	RESET	TRANSFER
COR	FOLLOW	REIN	SETTIME	WAIT
CORO	GET	RECK	SETTIME	WAVE
CYS	GOER	RELI	SETTIME	WEND
CYS	GOOD	REIN	SETTIME	WHILE
CYS	RELI	NAME	END	WIDE
DATA	IF	NEW	END	WHITE
DEF FN	INT	NEET	END	WHITE
DEF END	INPT	OUTS	LIST	
DEFEND	INPTS	OLD	NEW	
DEFINT	INPTS	ON	END	
DEFEND	INPT	ON SPACE	GOOD	

don't even consider using the manual. It's a reference guide for those equipped with a computer to hand:

The Bears should, Azari says, be stopped in three to four weeks. On past years, this means you might be playing with Bears before Christmas.

ET Basic is a reasonable version of Basic but, considering that a potentially high-end advanced macro is more than a little disappointing. It lacks speed in extremely disappointing in its graphics commands and control structures but does have a host of editing and debugging features. The wandering system makes writing programs appear more attractive but it may well be that the effort that has gone into making Basic

appear good, has made the more subtle and eloquent of a crowd. None matter.

Allen argues that as part of the bundled software, ST Basic shouldn't be considered the ultimate in BASIC and a spokesman has already confirmed, unofficially, that a new basic is being written, though not to be included in the bundled software. This particular hybrid of the language will address many of the criticisms of ST Basic and will include more hooks into OpenDoc as well as being far more structured and a great deal faster.

But for the moment we'd have to make do with Java's first offering: A wholly unremarkable job. Even so, after such a long wait for any IT-based language it's sure welcome.



UnitSoft

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26

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RESEARCH FRONT: RESTRUCTURING — *James E. Heston, Lutz Preuss, David S. Scharf* / *Journal of Management, Measurement, Funding, and Case Study: Some Issues*

[illegible][illegible]

ALL SOFTWARE, DATA PC, JOURNALING FILE, OPERATING SYSTEM, HARDWARE, AND PERIPHERALS

"WHEN IT COMES TO SOFTWARE-I LIKE TO BE FIRST ON THE BALL"

Here's what's in the November issue:

Reviews of all latest games, a survey of top home micros and software and programs for owners of Sinclair, Amstrad, Commodore and Acorn machines.

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Luther Blissett

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Reviews

Absurd flights

Program: *Party Profound* **Miles:** Spectrum Price £2.95 **Supplies:** Software Firm.

The Party Profound isn't the inventor of a better champagne as far as I know, though as the ori-

gin's always so easy) by the most unlikely means. It all cuts the absurd flights of fancy of the Professor's Kousenware variety.

Powered with the resources available at the top of the screen you have to arrange these carefully using a cursor, then when you think you have it you start the chain of events and hey presto.



gins of this game he might well be. After all, how many people do you know who need a table, fish bowl, lamp, vase, cigarette and lighter, match and box of matches, spring and finally a real champagne (at least the match)?

Yes, Software Firm has devised the year's oddest computer game and I'm enjoying my time and not specifying which year!

The idea is to complete six simple tasks, such as trying to stop, breaking the too or even loading a program into a Spectrum (sorry, that one

you usually find that you haven't and it all falls apart).

It's a superb idea with many amusing touches but it all collapses because the possibility of absurdity demands extreme accuracy. For me it all became frustrating, though I suppose some patients made with a love of lateral thinking will enjoy it more.

And if you find it all too obvious, then you're probably confident!

John Miles



Faint-hearted

Program: *Subterranean Striker* **Miles:** CPG range **Price:** £3.95 **Supplies:** Amsoft, Brentwood House, 188 Kings Road, Stockwood, Essex.

With this tape Amsoft has taken elements of *Scramble* and *Defender* and combined them in a game that lacks the classic simplicity of both of them. It is also remarkably dated in its implementation - chunky graphics, heavy sound effects and, worst of all, pot-drawing fakery amounting that is almost bad enough to induce suspicion in faint-hearted enthusiasts.

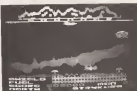
The idea is that you have to fly left, right, up and down in your spaceship over a scrolling landscape trying to find little men, who have been put to work digging by evil

forces. At the same time, space monster types crashers that around ready to be shot.

At one point in the landscape is a hole in the ground down which you can fly to find a series of screens, some very narrow indeed, where the same sort of thing is going on. At the top is a *Defender* style radar screen showing the current layout, location of monsters and so on.

In fact, as a game it's not too bad if you like that sort of thing, which I do, and it would have made a good cheapy. It's even reasonably addictive, although it kills you off a bit too liberally, forcing you right back to the beginning again. If only the implementation had been a bit better I might have liked it much more. Now excuse me while I go to lie down in a sterilised room.

Tony Keadle



Screen editor

Program: *QC* **Miles:** QL **Price:** £29.95 **Supplies:** GRT, 14 High St, Longmeads, Crowthorne, G44 2SB.

C is an increasingly popular language famed at a rapid and efficient compilation into machine code. By the time of its structured approach, general simplicity and accessibility for a wide range of systems applications (C's origins lie in work on mini-computer assembly languages at Bell Laboratories) but the last few years have seen a growing concentration in the main-
frame.

There has been a lot of a race on to be the first to market a C-compiler for the QL, but the winner was GRT whose recently launched *QC* package has been even more recently up-dated to include a full-fledged screen editor.

QC is a variant of *Basic* - a sub-set of C - but has several additional features including assigned values, assignment operators and standard local variables. The main features missing are full floating point maths and multi-dimensional arrays. Multi-dimensional arrays, however, may be simulated through the use of pointers (variables designating other variables) as an array and accessed as if it were two dimensional.

Opening the box reveals

one 84-page user manual, one copy of *A Book on C* by B.F. Berry and B. Mackenzie (published by Macmillan and worth £7.95 in the shops) and three QL microdrives. Those seeking to focus on the idea of microdrives will be glad to know that they contain a copy function in addition to the all important C-files.

The first microdrive (*QC1*) holds the *QC* compiler and assembly, as well as a linker to join programs with the library files on the second microdrive (*QC2*). In addition to the libraries and a window manager, *QC3* contains the compiler, assembler and linker in combination. The third microdrive (*QC4*) is the most recent up-date to the

product and contains the screen editor and an improved version of the compile program which allows the editor and displays directly via.

QC is good value for money and the combination of manual (well presented) and book makes it an excellent choice for someone with some experience of programming who wants to learn C.

The package is probably not suitable for an absolute beginner but first-time computer buyers who have opted for a QL are probably not wasting their way through Super Sales anyway.

Jonathan Prentidge



Hot dog

Figure Skating Games III: Ice Contenders for Pairs \$9.95 (cass) \$14.95 (disc) **Supplier** US Gold, Unit 15, The Parkway Industrial Centre, Henegave Street, Birmingham B7 4L



What's the secret of good comedy? Timing, of course, but it is also the secret of good computerized water. Water Games plays left, for the festive season approacheth and

snow, you control the movements of a skater using the joystick, but for once, skill and timing are needed. Avoid jumps and Lutz jumps penalties, but expect to spend most of your first five attempts on your bottom. Hot Dipping (penalties on skis in pool) requires very much the same skills

With the jumping, you must time the moment of your take-off, then adjust your position in the air.

Bobbed is another left and right job, but this time you are steering your skis down the run, clearing into the co-



our Krysops is also destined for many a skidding.

You alter a whole manner of sports simulated by joystick wiggling, the Cypriote (some crickets need to colder closer to give scintillating silhouettes everywhere the opportunity to indulge in such thrice sports as Free Skating, Figure Skating Speed Skating, Ice Jumping, Bobsled, Bobbed and Hot Dipping (not another joystick demonstration? Well, in this case, no).

In the Free Skating and Figure Skating (arguably the

best) — you'll find yourself swerving to rhythm!

Finally, my favourite — the Bobsled. Racing against the clock, it is a combination of wot endurance and reaction, as you alternate between steering and slowing.

It is the fab graphics and sound that put this program head and shoulders above the competition. Most touches abound and the package comes with professionalism.

John Cook



Hard work

Programs Chemistry Micre BBC & Electron Future \$1; \$9 **Supplier** Lene & Co, Dairy House, Borough Rd, London SE1 1AW

I'd admit my own chemistry knows a lot to be desired... well, it did until I owned scores these programs. I don't want to re-ut O-levels, but it I did then this would be on my serious schedule. It is the latest in the Lene range of study aids: a set of computerised revision programs covering 16 - Chemistry - is, O-levels, CSE etc.

It is a suite of programs in two categories covering a wide range of topics in the common core syllabuses. The approach is a series of questions. Some are of the "fill in the missing words" type, others require you to move the

cursor to the correct part of a chart or table of elements. There is even a clever program drawing apparatus requiring you to wrap bits around until you have the correct configurations for making various gases. Each quiz offers choices of difficulty and a "help" prompt.

I enjoyed the challenges and the displays are pretty good. Make no mistake this isn't as much fun as playing Breakout. It is hard work and can become a shade tedious if you run through several items at one sitting. Nevertheless it beats re-writing test books and notes any time.

The package does its job quite well. It gives you basic-level practice at what you are unsure of. But don't worry, it is unlikely to put your science teacher out of work.

Diana Wadman



Scaled up

Programs Music Construction De-More Commodore Future \$9.95 **Supplier** Amsoftech, Brix

Iremember my old piano teacher telling me work after work to practice my scales and learn my note reading.

Today, armed with a computer, your promises change, all you need is to know which key makes which note and all the rest is done for you. Oh well, maybe the new teacher the guitar!

Normally in any musically oriented program you need to know at least two basic things, as in for string, push and bow and all just some knowledge of written music; but, with this marvellous tool, drive release, life as a lot simpler even for those who are laughed.

There will be some comparisons here in Amsoftech's Music Studio, which basically does the same thing as the above in a more educational way, but (like) MGS is easier to use in every sense of the word.

On loading up you are presented with two choices; learn to the demo notes, or enter

writing your own compositions. There are 13 notes available to listen to (from Bb to B) and showing you the many different sounds that can be made from this program.

Actually writing the music is easy. On screen are a number of working lines, musical notes and a blank sheet of "music paper". You simply select the power key, pick up a note with it and using the joystick (or keyboard) position it on the sheet. As you lay it down, the sound of the note is heard and after all the notes are positioned simply select the power key and your tune will play.

Obviously, to program a full composition with bass notes, chords, and percussion, utilizing the Commodore's full three channels will take some time, but after hearing the demo it will be worth it (I think Bb is a nice note for synthesized sound).

A good handbook is supplied, well written and providing a few examples for you to get you're your way.

This was previously only available on disc but I am assured that nothing had been omitted from the original, highly recommended.

Sally Moss



THE

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Hi-Lo

Chance your arm without losing your shirt—on the Commodore 64 written by John Parsona

This is a game based on the popular movie money-guesser. Basically, the player aims to win the jackpot (which starts at 20p but increases by 1p for every unsuccessful go) by correctly predicting whether the turn of a card will reveal a card-value higher or lower than that of the preceding one.

If they predict correctly for all five cards, then the jackpot is won. Full in-

structions are included in the program, which makes good use of the 64's own graphic characters.

Program Notes

- 10-75 Initialisation
- 100-140 Instructions
- 140-270 Calculates push left and displays along with totals of five cards
- 280-340 Real card value of cards

340-349

350-400

5000-1000

5070-1000

5270-1000

1400-1470

2500-1000

Checks for repetition among cards

Prompts user the card

Prompts player's decision

Displays appropriate message

Asks "Another Card?" - if yes,

displays overall profit

Displays message for bankrupt player

Resets values



Adventure by numbers

The final part of an adventure generator for the Spectrum
by **Hugh Winkler**

This week some brief program notes plus the remainder of the Basic listing. Don't forget, this is not actually an adventure, but a framework on which you can write your own by filling in the blanks.

1. Input System (Lines 100 to 400)

Commands are printed on screen, as they are typed, letter by letter, on the keyboard. The usual editing facilities are present: Delete letter with Caps Shift - D, Delete whole line with Caps Shift - J. However, it is not possible to use Cursor keys: in addition, Symbol Shift - J represents the last command entered.

Press Enter to terminate Command and read in the Analyser ("parse").

2. Command Analysis (Lines 410 to 1000)

The Analyser recognises three types of Command: (a) Movement, eg. N or North; (b) Single Verb (eg. V (to, look),

Look or G (to, Verb + Noun

While the program responds later to the Verb or Verb + Noun type of input, fairly complex 'semi-English' commands are accepted including 'I' (recognised as the last Noun entered) and 'Everything' (as, Ever) and 'All' in the case of the Get/Drop resources.

The words And, Then or 'And Then' are recognised as connectors between separate commands, thus, relatively complex multiple commands may be entered as one statement. While as first has been placed on the number of commands which may be accepted in this way, the program will stop analysing the statement as soon as it is unable to execute one of the commands.

The expressions 'GO+NN' and 'GO+NNN' in Lines 1410 & 1415 (resp) are used during program development. The cumulative effect of the instructions repeated during analysis increases the response time significantly. When the

various arrays are complete three expressions should be replaced by the appropriate numeric values.

The rest of the program is fairly standard. The Location-dependent status conditions are dealt with in each instance subroutines as are the Verb/Noun or Verb or Movement conditions checked in their own separate routines. This governs the General Status Table becoming 'staggered' with underfoot conditions.

This program is written with Caps Shift on, I realise that this gives an 'artificial' look to the presentation, but it is purely for clarity, especially as a ZX Printer has been used. Luckily, I have avoided multiple-statement lines for the sake of clarity. Commandable memory may be saved by using multiple statements in the finished program.

The use of variables for commonly used numeric values is also beneficial in terms of memory but not recommended as the Analyser routine because of the need for a fast response time. Finally, on the Spectrum, if you use more than 64K of memory by using keywords for 'FOR', 'AT', 'IN' etc.

```

1000 REM *****
1010 REM *****
1020 REM *****
1030 REM *****
1040 REM *****
1050 REM *****
1060 REM *****
1070 REM *****
1080 REM *****
1090 REM *****
1100 REM *****
1110 REM *****
1120 REM *****
1130 REM *****
1140 REM *****
1150 REM *****
1160 REM *****
1170 REM *****
1180 REM *****
1190 REM *****
1200 REM *****
1210 REM *****
1220 REM *****
1230 REM *****
1240 REM *****
1250 REM *****
1260 REM *****
1270 REM *****
1280 REM *****
1290 REM *****
1300 REM *****
1310 REM *****
1320 REM *****
1330 REM *****
1340 REM *****
1350 REM *****
1360 REM *****
1370 REM *****
1380 REM *****
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1600 REM *****
1610 REM *****
1620 REM *****
1630 REM *****
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1670 REM *****
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1700 REM *****
1710 REM *****
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1790 REM *****
1800 REM *****
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1880 REM *****
1890 REM *****
1900 REM *****
1910 REM *****
1920 REM *****
1930 REM *****
1940 REM *****
1950 REM *****
1960 REM *****
1970 REM *****
1980 REM *****
1990 REM *****
2000 REM *****

```

```

2010 REM *****
2020 REM *****
2030 REM *****
2040 REM *****
2050 REM *****
2060 REM *****
2070 REM *****
2080 REM *****
2090 REM *****
2100 REM *****
2110 REM *****
2120 REM *****
2130 REM *****
2140 REM *****
2150 REM *****
2160 REM *****
2170 REM *****
2180 REM *****
2190 REM *****
2200 REM *****
2210 REM *****
2220 REM *****
2230 REM *****
2240 REM *****
2250 REM *****
2260 REM *****
2270 REM *****
2280 REM *****
2290 REM *****
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2920 REM *****
2930 REM *****
2940 REM *****
2950 REM *****
2960 REM *****
2970 REM *****
2980 REM *****
2990 REM *****
3000 REM *****

```


The adventure continues...

More mythical songs-as-on-the-CL... all from the keyboard of Philo Sorostov

Maybe losing the week... but don't worry, it's well worth the effort. However, you can save

is a licensed manuscript (plus 50%) is due in March, February, March, North Yorkshire, and England was back a year.

1000

The remainder of the listing will be omitted, not needed.

[illegible]

Driven by sound

Always brought to you on the AMG Max or Ex Model

This is the first in a series of three programs for creating music on the IBCB. The next one will take the main data (written by this one) from cassette or disc and write a final program version of the same. The third program will use the main data to play the music via machine code and tapes or you can use it on cassette or whistling.

After you've typed in the programs (and saved them) and debugged them you'll have a means of viewing usage data and quickly fix performance. If you don't limit up to doing all that work then you'll be in the for a cassette use, having the entire suite of programs. If you need all 80 you get a free inch that with of the program plus two more inches plus all three articles in the series in Wordware format. A three inch that with 112 because they are more expensive for me to buy.

The first program starts the notes divided in a row by four matrix (array), and keeps track of how many notes are on the row in the variable "notes." Rather than try to give you a blow by blow description of how the program works, I will tell you how to use it.

The first thing to do is create some suitable sound envelopes and there is a new driver, envelope designer within the program. To reach it Press 'C' - **Enviro** - in response to the first sound parameter asked for in the main input section. Hereafter you will see hear the device sets and you actually select a parameter. The User Guide may help you to understand the section but experienced will teach you more.

Above the main input window is a colored help window to remind you of the various commands available. All these command options and *what's new* for the first parameter input. If you make a mistake you get the opportunity to do it again. The program is pleasantly supplied with graphics and back traps and, once debugged, usage will always show whatever section you're in and return you to the main input menu through it's better to use the escape codes provided: *'h'* - return - will change the help window to the next window which displays the note values for all the notes available: *'b'* - return - leaves the help window back

Factor = factor - will play back from
and one of P < return - plays back from
the beginning. While the notes are playing
their parameters are displayed in
the input window together with a reference
number for each note. That is the
number used for editing, deleting, play
back and

"Linear" e-Return® allows you to select the entire width that matches all 31" x 30".

Sumo: with no number takes you to the selling section which will ask for the number of the note to be entered.

Debit \rightarrow before \rightarrow performs manually and asks for confirmation before debit on the note

'Next' < return >: hits you with a note after note number six. It displays and plays note number six then asks for the parameters of the note to be entered. If you confirm the new note it will be entered at that point and the music will be played back from a few notes before the entered one.

The **<status>** allows you to synchronize up the three notes on channel one to three. You'll be asked how many notes and their numbers. Do not try to sync channel one as it will appear to work for while then hang up the program. You may be able to get out of the hang up with escape but sometimes only delete will work and then you're lost all the channel data. Switch on for

The **CHARACTER** option allows you to save the text data in disc or memory. Just as once you've used the 'ASCII' facility the first two bytes of each note are compressed into one byte. They are expanded again when used by any of the three programs. This allows a considerable saving in memory consumption.

More noise and the remainder of the
human race would

[illegible]

Arcade Avenue



Hall of Fame

After the fun with *Rad* and *Demolition* a few weeks ago (September 18), Gregg Sharkey of Seattle writes that he tried out a modified version of the message linker on some Amstrad programs. Needless to say we wouldn't be printing this if it hadn't worked! To see silly messages and playing time under the and play Amstrad's *Power* says out. When you're done that Gregg would like an infinite corridor (over) point

Result 1
18 January 1989
10101 / 10101
10101 / 10101
10101 / 10101
10101 / 10101
10101 / 10101
10101 / 10101

Spout is a marvelous game. It has an extraordinary sense of humor that steps it becoming just another platform game, eg, the way the score tries to climb the twin on screen one, the crawling robot as he walks across and - into toches that make the game special rather than just the bare minimum necessary to get Amstrad to publish it.

Following on from this play, Colin Brown of London says that since we publish people's birthday games why don't I reward my own birthday 'hall of fame' for what of his game is a go to mark the recent passing of the first anniversary of the others.

The games industry has come a long way from its origins. All we had a few years ago was *Space Invaders*, etc. It quickly became apparent that some games could not compete graphically with the arcade but had transcendent scope for adding complexity and richness of plot.

With the exception of the work of a few companies such as Amstrad and Japanese writing for the BBC, and US

Gold's range, very few pay machine games are ever being converted. Of those that have appeared I find it hard to pick favorites since, having wasted a fortune on them, I like my decent replacements. *Moon*, *Chase*, *Tutankhamun*, *Defend* or *Die*, video postmodern are all never far from my mind. I would include *Warner* and *Wilder* Games and *Mat* - because's the best - from the letters I get. For everyone's current pleasure.

Instead of conversations of course we now have megagames such as *Earth*, *Love*, *Life*, etc. Of these there are actually very few that I ever bother to load up these days, despite the new with which I last viewed them.

Perhaps it is the result of seeing so many games yet having little time to get very deeply into any one of them. Alternatively perhaps it's part of a general backlash against the increasing complexity.

Write in if you agree or disagree and we'll see what the world thinks.

Of the arcade adventures my favorites are a mixed

bag but in fact have mixed in occasion - *Don*, *Demolition*, *Manpower*, *Amstrad*.

Dragonair, *Castle Quest*, *Snail*, *Invincible*, etc, and the truly series all have an addictive combination of simplicity and adventure problems solving.

Objects appear in the right places, problems have (usually) sensible solutions and there is a realistic flexibility about the things you can do. They are all steps towards the first computer generated attractive menu.

I will also call *Made of the Things* an arcade adventure since I don't know where else to put it. It looks dated now but still compares more favorably than any game with the possible exception of the excellent *Alan*.

Series of the *Things* was disappointing. The monsters were made as vicious the only way to win was to go onto auto-fire, which you could do without running out of ammo, and killed the still had game.

Of strategy games I have already written about *Chess* and of course you can never forget *Football Manager* or *Cliff's Football Club* - exactly

the same game idea as *Football* with different baggage and lesser players. I haven't seen Amstrad's *Mid* Order *Master* or *Amstrad* if yes, but they sound pretty good.

The final type are releases that are of high enough quality, additiveness and simplicity to warrant conversion the other way - from the source on to the big arcade machines. These include *Stop the Express*, most from Taito, especially *Splosion II* and *Pinop II*, *Amstrad* *Master*, and *Highway Encounter*, the latest from Vector. I've recently seen the Amstrad conversion of this and it is brilliant.

Like Knight, *Like*, the graphics leap out with crystal clarity in the higher res and look like they were designed with the CPC in mind. The game itself has an original and interesting atmosphere, truly alien to look at and offers a nice balance between being easy enough to be encouraging, yet enjoyable enough to keep you playing even if you've finished a stage.

Is that for off to have another go now.

Tony Kettle

Manpower from Gregg's Game



Tony Bridge's Adventure Corner



Pure puzzle

There is much variety in adventures nowadays, and we have a couple of examples this week that illustrate the two-point extremes which most text adventures seem to be moving

Sophisticated command input is the norm nowadays, but a verb/noun input is just as viable, albeit a little inefficient. Probably the most well-known writer to use the latter, and he still uses it, is Scott Adams. As I said last week when talking about Sinclair's *The Fears*, even when offered a complex sentence input I usually use the two-word form - I find it quicker and not as prone to typing errors, which are quick to correct anyway. I find myself wondering, of course, how much memory has been used up in coding the necessary responses, although it's true that Scott Adams and Adventure International seem to have used the extra memory available nowadays to create graphics rather than more complex scenarios.

Michael Sleep has written a pure adventure for the C64 which he proudly describes as a 'Scott Adams-style text adventure with some graphics and sound'. It is on disc or tape, and there is a Vio-20 version too.

The program is called *Animal Magic*, and contains your quest for the baby, which has been grabbed from the nursery by a passing golden eagle - an everyday story, you'd agree. Peter has aimed for 'gashy rather than goshy', so has adopted the verb/noun form of input. There are some 40 locations and 84 objects.

The author has asserted that there is a problem to be solved in just about every

location, and objects to be found in every room, the ones for which must be guessed out. This type of adventure is completely devoid of any distractions like character inter-action, or humorous remarks from the computer - *Animal Magic* is pure puzzle, and very enjoyable as a result.

The adventure looks attractive, making much use of bit-mapped graphics and the odd bit of sound (the baby has a particularly life-like wail as it is carried away). At many locations a well-drawn graphic page depicting a creature or object present at the location, and these provide not only a bit of colour but also a bit of atmosphere that is, frankly, missing from the rest of the game.

However puzzle adventures such as this do not, really, need much atmosphere, as the puzzle is the thing.

Animal Magic is one of those wonderful games in which the player progresses steadily through the puzzles, finding an object and actions which will solve the problems in order to get on to the next one - and then, given the next problem, the player finds an object it needed that was discarded 20 locations ago. A very enjoyable and uncomplicated adventure, and great value at just £12.50 from Richard Sleep, 105 St Margaret's Road, Truro, Cornwall, TR1 1AA.

State of the art parser

Between the parser he said to favour the two word, verb/noun input - in fact, just the opposite, as this parser is just about state-of-the-art (though not as good as that in *The Fears*). Although the player has to be more wary of typing errors and logical non-sequences, nevertheless, complex sentences can certainly get round those awkward moments when you are trying something a little out of the ordinary that may not be covered by any well-observed combination of verb/noun. Infocom adventures of course have the added advantage of being traditionally disc based, so that memory constraints are not a problem, you must neither page full of descriptions! Then perhaps up the disc drive and load in a few hundred bytes of text.

Infocom has called its new adventure, *Wishbringer*, an introductory Level-3 program. This may mean beguineer to most people, but Infocom are certainly not

going to let you get away as easily as that! The usual Infocom packaging (26-page instruction manual, playing map, letter - not to be opened until instructed - and the *Wishbringer* story, which (given in the disk) accompanies an adventure which, like *Animal Magic*, will certainly be enjoyed by the novice, but which will also give joy to the more experienced.

In *Wishbringer*, you're a goodly clerk at a small seaside village called Fawston. You deliver a strange message in a magic shop (this one gives a certain amount of time for this), and discover that an old woman's black cat has been kidnapped by the 'evil one'. The old woman asks for your help, and when you leave the magic shop, you find yourself trapped in a nightmare world. Your new-found home is now full of nasty folk, villagers, fortress-like towers and assorted wickedness. You become entangled in the struggle between Good and Evil, extraordinary help is found only in an unreal place.

Spell casting

The map supplied is comprehensive and helpful in the first stages, but can be cold comfort - there are more things to be done as the first stage than would be apparent at first in that the magic shop is a watershed. It is easily found, but once passed, there is no way back, the player has to go forward to the second stage, and some objects from the first stage are necessary in the second. These objects are mostly to do with spell-casting, which forms a large part of *Wishbringer* and which becomes essential. For example, soon after leaving the magic shop, you may be thrown into jail - as far as I could tell, there is no way out short of casting the freedom spell. However, to cast this spell, you must be in possession of the candy.

So, a lot of thought is required, and much use of the *Save* facility. For the problems are logical and not too hard to overcome with a bit of thought - and the storyline, as usual with Infocom, is wonderful. Written by Brian Moriarty, it is the usual mix of intricate plots and interesting though not impossible in the usual problems. The usual Infocom format is at full swing too - at some point you will meet a troll, and the program goes on to say 'A, this original story would probably refer to an ugly, gnomish creature as a troll' - you'll come across the troll taking for a toll at a bridge, and the program is just dying to say 'ask a man for whom the troll rots'. The author seems to be able to anticipate your every command, as I have found with all Infocom adventures.

Wishbringer is a world away from *Animal Magic* - the packaging is superb and the adventure itself is much more sophisticated.

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Figure 1. *Antenna and eye morphology of* *Phaenocarpa* *sp.*

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New Releases

CURIOUS

The *Secret Diary of Adrian Mole* is a cartoon after The Beatles' (and prog-rock) manner: program featured gentle, reflective humor and accurate observation of the quirks of parents and children. Not the sort of stuff you expect to see translated into a computer program.

Hard to describe exactly what the program is, but an adventure game it lacks complex puzzles and text input, for the sake of simplicity the vague term *adventure* seems well here to do.

The screen looks like an graphics adventure - a series of simple graphics at the top of the screen illustrate the current situation, eg, when Adrian is wondering about point you gaze past point at the top of the screen. However, whilst a great range of text scrolls past in the bottom two thirds of the screen, your information is limited to choosing between three options. Options are selected simply by pressing a number key.

And so it goes really, lots of rapidly daily reality is it based around the books which occasionally stops to ask you between those options for what happens next, the end objective being to become a model schoolboy. Ideal, by everyone.

I must admit I found the whole thing rather pointless. Reiterating scenes of action so much may mean more room for text but it greatly reduces any real sense of involvement or challenge. Perhaps this is the view of someone expecting an adventure, but I find it hard to imagine that anyone could find the program to be boring. Perhaps the format would make it suitable for very young children but then I'm not sure they would appreciate the subtleties of the text. A curious release.

Program Secret Diary of Adrian Mole
Price £3.95
Media Floppy
Supplier Monitor Publishing
183 Upper Street
Singapore
London
N1 1PQ

SYMBOLIC

The Commodore 64 can now run *Prolog* (or rather *Micro Prolog*), a computer language for which much is claimed. It has been chosen by the Japanese Fifth Generation computer project.

This Commodore implementation of *Micro Prolog* comes on disc with a speed board manual which accompanies with the basic commands available to *Prolog* and their use in sample

Pick of the week

MERGED PICTURES

Incentive Software will shortly release a complete graphics adventure authoring system for the Amstrad. With the Quik resolution as a pre-empted picture it's a brave step to make.

The *Graphic Adventure Creator* costs £23.95 - not cheap but if you compare this to *Graphic Adventure* it is actually less. But are the two systems compatible?

In the end I think the *Graphic Adventure Creator* is the better program. It combines greater power with much greater ease of use. Both graphics designer and text organizer are in memory at the same time and the logic is much easier to master.

The text element works in a similar way to Quik. Rooms are numbered, described, and arranged and have pictures assigned to them. Similarly objects are numbered and placed. Synonyms are entered by merely by assigning them all with the same number eg, Take, Get, Carry, and Hold could all be numbered five and any one would be equally acceptable to the computer.

The computer can be made to understand multi-argument instructions derived by comma, dots, and/or anything you wish and because the words are held in full you are not restricted at all - even words like River and Hunt with the same four letters will be distinguished.

The graphics element is



similarly easy to use. You get the usual routines which may be moved in large or small steps. In-built facilities include a square, rectangle and even all of which work on a rubber banding basis and are very easily viewed in size.

Colors may be mixed together and used to fill any enclosed shape, etc etc. You may also merge one picture with another and thus subtly alter it.

It's a beautifully designed package and does make the Quik's good few steps on, if you have an Amstrad you're lucky - I once someone to buy it for you for Christmas.

Program The Graphic Adventure Creator
Price £23.95
Media Amstrad
Supplier Incentive Software
85 London Street
Reading
RG1 1AQ



This Week

Program	Price	Media	Supplier
Adventure 2000	£1.95	Amstrad	Amstrad
Adventure 2000	£1.95	Amstrad	Amstrad
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Adventure 2000	£1.95	Amstrad	Amstrad

programs. You are also supplied with a book, *Start Problem Solving with Prolog*, which shows in greater detail how to solve the language on its own.

What Peirce's routine use of, more than anything else, is symbolic logic. Symbolic logic is the formal way of expressing all those mad sentences like all fish swim. (Of course that won't hold so many other things) therefore Swimmers is a fish.

Macro Prologues is a computer language that actually allows you to express *concepts* about the world in a series of statements instead of *if* then, *if* then not, type statements. This reorganization of the language is expressive and even at a massive \$195.00 for the package is a great value for those interested in programming and the business of making computers "think" processes more like human ones.

beats rivals like View about and Drive Club Pendants down. The biggest single advantage is that you get 1400 bytes free for data storage, it also costs \$58.95, which makes it a low-cost choice as well.

The packaging and presentation is excellent — a concise manual, a 32-page style reference card of commands, a short booklet explaining the point and use of spreadsheets and a card to lay over the top of your computer showing function key use. Oh, and a couple of letters on holding the line over your IBM.

It looks very good indeed but I won't pretend to give it the ultimate review it deserves here. With composable graph drawing programs like Chart (IBM®) already available and the promise of a database and 32-column word processor next year, it looks like a very useful machine.



Program:	Interschool
Price:	\$29.50
Media:	BAC
Supplier:	Computer Concepts Cardinalian Place Riverside, Mississippi Phone: 662-837-1001

GENE BLAKE

Executive forms part of a suite of programs for the EBC planned by Computer Concepts over the next few months. All are serious business utilities which help to speed sharing and timely maintenance of data.

Intergovernmental is an organizational form with a focus on public-private and national-international

ADVANTAGES

Real Alignment programs have been coming thick and fast recently too many to re-count now.

Robinson got a statue here, though, because it has produced a single tape which will work on almost any stereo (except, it seems, the Goosensons' set).

Actually it isn't a program at all, you don't actually need your computer to load. The Ektron tape has been designed to simply produce a patch that works according to the tape diagram—the high and low notes.

The package includes alignment tape, bond checker and small accessories and has two more values over the other packages intended to do the same job. First it's cheap, \$4.95, and secondly if you have more than one computer you don't need to use two separate packages. Very useful.

Program:	Head Alignment
	EC
Price:	\$4.95
Micro:	various
Supplier:	Endcom 30 Marine Place Falmouth, MA 01940 (508) 547-1100

STAGE DEAC

With a name like *Crumpy Crumphy Superditch*, it doesn't take much to realize that *Crumpy Crumphy's* latest game is not usually performed and shown, indeed.

Actually it sounds more than anything else, of the Wally game from 1949. (Yes, which is not to say it

showing how many positive features of the job. In fact it's more important.

The idea is that you see a store detective walk and count the number of your day in the store a number of different tasks must be accomplished.

These range from taking the time to shooting a round of darts that have avoided the ground floor – the, when you come to think of it, the best business.

To tell the story you need the gun which is in the manager's office but whenever you enter it he looks you out. Each task therefore consists of a number of sub-tasks.

Gregorously it has exactly the same strengths and balance as the Wolfy games — nice big outboard graphics, slightly roopy narration and a complete disregard to serious problems (as provided they don't bother me all that much, however).

It is a very ingenious game indeed, and the houses come easily from the game, one luxury at once of the class rather than a heavy handed self-conscious statement to the world.

The top of 'They rose, double on the shop ground floor' stands open as the game, capable to become a full catastrophe scene.

Programs:	Omnikey Omnikey Superiority
Price:	\$7.00
Notes:	Spectrum
Supplier:	Omnikey Graphics Alpha Home 10 Corner Street Sheffield S1 1AA 01 432

This Week

[illegible][illegible][illegible]



MACINTOSH V FILE 52031

[illegible][illegible]

...and a 100% increase in the number of people who have been vaccinated against the disease.

[illegible][illegible]

1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem. This involves gathering information about the situation and the people involved.

2. Once the problem is identified, the next step is to analyze it. This involves breaking the problem down into its components and understanding the underlying causes.


3. After analyzing the problem, the next step is to develop a plan. This involves determining the steps that need to be taken to solve the problem.

4. The final step is to implement the plan. This involves putting the plan into action and monitoring the results.

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